



The “Renaissance Zone:” The Future of Map Modernization

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Jefferson County, Kentucky

Louisville, KY - With the largest population in the state of Kentucky, the City of Louisville is the economic engine for Jefferson County. Located along the Ohio River, the city has a long history of flooding. After severe flooding in 1997, the Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) initiated partnerships among private businesses, residents, and local, state, and federal governments to develop a business plan for identifying mapping needs and priorities with the goal of flood prevention.



One area of concentration for the new mapping efforts was in Louisville’s “Renaissance Zone,” a redevelopment project area supported by the local, state, and federal governments. Approximately 60 percent of the Renaissance Zone is located in the floodplain. For the region to sustain economic vibrancy, MSD addressed existing and anticipated flooding from new developments. To protect their investments, businesses invested in addressing the area’s flood hazards. The Renaissance Zone showcases map modernization: leveraging funds, partnerships, and the use of technology to provide an ideal platform for change.

As funding became available, the Flood Rate Insurance Maps (FIRMs) were updated. The revised topography yielded a better definition of the floodplain. This allowed MSD to conduct more effective floodplain management and implement an aggressive floodplain management ordinance. Through the use of Geographic Information Systems technology, the FIRMs were digitized, enabling integrated hydrology modeling and flood analyses.

Updated modeling and modernized maps visually presented the risks facing specific properties. Leveraging this insight, MSD brought local businesses and industries together to construct cost effective flood control projects and implement the necessary watershed management activities.

The Renaissance Zone is a microcosm that offers a vision for the future of map modernization. MSD has built a reputation as a national leader in stormwater management through its balanced approach to mitigation and its commitment to protecting its citizens through innovation and partnership.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County (County-wide)**

FEMA Region: **Region IV**

State: **Kentucky**

County: **Jefferson County**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**
Hazard Type: **Flooding**
Activity/Project Type: **Flood Study Map Rollout/ Map Modernization**
Activity/Project Start Date: **08/1997**
Activity/Project End Date: **Ongoing**
Funding Source: **Local Sources; Map Modernization**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **Amount Not Available**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal
Disaster? **Unknown**
Value Tested By Disaster? **Unknown**
Repetitive Loss Property? **Unknown**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/mm_main.shtm
Reference URL 2: <http://www.msdlouky.org>

Main Points

- One area of concentration for the new mapping efforts was in Louisville's "Renaissance Zone," a redevelopment project area supported by the local, state, and federal governments.
- The Renaissance Zone showcases map modernization: leveraging funds, partnerships, and the use of technology to provide an ideal platform for change.
- Through the use of Geographic Information Systems technology, the FIRMs were digitized, enabling integrated hydrology modeling and flood analyses.